Museum, written in French prose by Robert de Borron and Walter Mapes,* and which was made known to the general reader by Mr. Wright, in the first volume of the "Archæological Journal," p. 301. The date of it is probably 1316. Some of the illuminations in this show [as you may see on the annexed copy of one of them, fig. 6] these barbicans exactly like the badge of Anthony of Burgundy.

In all the cases, too, that I observed when looking through the MS. these penthouses are on the outermost work and over the gateway, so that I think we may say these were really the original barbicans, and that afterwards the name took a wider significance in England, and came to express also the outer work, either of wood or stone, to which they would have been attached. Abroad, however, it was less so. Florio, in his Italian Dictionary, 1598, explains *barbacane* to mean only "an out-nooke, or corner standing out of a house; a jettie."† And a jetty in mediæval buildings we know was a part of a building that projected beyond the rest, and overhung the wall below. The projection of an upper floor beyond the lower, which we see in old houses, was called a jetty. The only meaning given by Roquefort in his "Dictionnaire Etymologique de la Langue Françoise," is "Fente perpendiculaire pour l'écoulement des eaux; ouverture pour tirer sur l'ennemi sans se decouvrir;" and in any ordinary French dictionary the only translation of the word *barbacane* is, "a hole made in a wall from space to space, thereby to drain the water; also a loop-hole in a wall to shoot through." This view is further borne out by a translation of Grosteste's "Chasteau d'Amour," in a MS. of the end of the fourteenth century,‡ wherein a castle is described, and which goes on thus:—

"This castil is ever ful of love and of grace,
To al that any nede has socour and solace,
Four toures ey hit has, and kernels fair,
Thre boillices al aboute, that may nost spair;
Nouther hert may wele thinke ne tung may wel telle,
Al the bounté and the bewét of this fik castelle.
Seven *barbicans* are sette so sekirly aboute,
That no maner of shoting may greve fro withoute."

A description which evidently refers to such penthouse defences as I have described, and not to watch-towers or outer works.

I will simply add, that the MS. from which the illustration, No. 6, is taken, contains many curious illustrations of the architecture of the period, as well as of its manners, and deserves further examination.

GEORGE GODWIN.

THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

THE alterations which have been made while the Museum was closed last week, will be satisfactory to the visitors of the reading-room, although the novelty of arrangement in the contents of the book-cases may at first prove a little bewildering: this, however, is soon surmounted, and the removal of the absurd wire-guard fronts is as great an improvement, almost, as the means which have been taken to give light to the sides of the rooms under the windows, by inserting iron gratings in the floors of the galleries: it is a reproach to the trustees that these steps in the right path have been delayed so long.

The contents of the book-cases have been considerably altered, and Mr. Panizzi has not only improved their arrangements, but has considerately withdrawn nearly all the old lumber and replaced it by books of standard reference. The parliamentary and law papers, with the *Gazettes*, occupy nearly their old station and three sides of the left-hand room on entering; the fourth, or end opposite the entrance, is supplied with books on general and English history, in four cases; state papers, one case; and the remainder by topographical history.

In the right-hand room, four cases are given to biography and travels; then follow the encyclopædias and dictionaries, in their old places; English classics are being arranged, and are followed by the ancient authors in their old position.

Ten cases are given to magazines and reviews; two to the Bible; two to church history; thirteen to transactions of societies; two to heraldry; and the remainder to calendars, directories, &c.

But the most gratifying announcement that we have to make is, that three sides of the left-hand room are now occupied by the catalogues, and that the reader will now find *a catalogue of all the works in the library*. Two copies of a "supplementary" catalogue, each in 153 volumes, are placed one on each side of the old 70-volume catalogue, in a manner calculated to obviate crowding and to give easy access to any letter. The number of volumes is, in our opinion, a benefit, as it divides each letter into more portions, and renders it almost impossible that a reader can monopolise it, as was often the case in former times.

It is calculated that the new arrangement gives, by removal of desks, &c., seats for twenty more readers in those crowded rooms (which we hope to see changed for more commodious buildings, *as has been proposed*, and that soon); and that the arrears of books not accessible, *i. e.* not in the catalogue, do not now exceed a thousand in number.

WESLEYAN SCHOOLS, BURSLEM, STAFFORDSHIRE POTTERIES.

ON Wednesday, the 4th inst., was laid the corner stone of the above schools by Thomas Farmer, Esq., of Gunnersbury-house, Middlesex, amid a large concourse of people. The trowel used was a memorial of the staple trade of the potteries, consisting of a blade of porcelain, diapered with mazarine blue and gold, with a view of the intended building in the centre of the obverse, and on the reverse the presentation inscription: the blade is enclosed in a chased silver rim, with "forget-me-nots" and ribands intertwined at intervals; the handle is of amber glass. The china, with its painting and gilding, was the gratuitous work of Messrs. Alcock, manufacturers, in the town; the silversmiths' work was by Birmingham artists.

The building will be of brick, from a design by Messrs. Ward, architects, of Hanley, in the Italian style. It will consist of an arcade of six large arches in the main front, with two tiers of windows, relieved by stone dressings and strings. The entrances will be at the ends. The ground-floor will consist of a school-room 65 feet 4 inches by 35 feet; two good-sized class-rooms, with staircases, washing-closets, and water-closets at each end. Two other good class-rooms will be gained, one at each end, in a mezzanine story, effecting thereby a considerable saving of space. The upper story will consist of one large school-room, 75 feet by 35 feet, and will have an open timber roof, with iron tie-rods, and arched timbers, giving height to the rooms. The lower school-room will have an elevation of 17½ feet clear height, and the upper one of 22 feet clear height. There will be a firing vault under one end, in which Hasard's apparatus will be fixed, with which will be combined a system of ventilation.

GAS.

THE right way to ensure an extensive consumption of gas in private dwellings is now about to be adopted, it appears, by the Great Central Gas Consumers' Company, who have advertised that they "are ready, *at their own expense*, to supply services and meters to the gas consumers in the city of London,"—charging, of course, a small per centage separately for the accommodation. In saying so, however, we trust we do not give them credit for more sagacity than they really manifest; for the terms of their advertisement are certainly equivocal: "at their own expense" *may* refer to "the gas consumers," and not to "the company." Another form of advertisement ought to be issued if the company really design to adopt a system which is said to have already worked so well in the provinces.—The Chartered and the City Companies, it is said, have threatened to reduce their prices down to 3s., or even less, if the new company sell at 4s. The result of such a fine of procedure, we will venture to anticipate, will be very different from what may be either designed or dreaded. The new company have almost completed the laying of their pipes throughout the City, and they, too, already speak of reductions of price, offering, indeed, a deduction of 8d. per 1,000 feet, on certain conditions, to all who shall open accounts with them previous to the 29th instant.——Another grand American invention or discovery in gas-lighting has been announced,—namely, the production of a pure and cheap gas by inserting into a red hot retort a hollow cylinder, or case, filled with naphtha, which is immediately changed into permanent gas of twice the density of coal gas, and requiring a very small burner to yield a very brilliant light. A patent, it is said, has been taken out for this invention by a Dr. Gesner, of Halifax, Nova Scotia.——As to Paine's process, it remains in as much doubt as ever. Several *gas engineers employed by companies* examined it in Mr. Paine's absence, but besides insinuations and suspicions in regard to what they did *not see*, their evidence militated rather in its favour than otherwise. They were convinced *that pure hydrogen gas was produced*,—that it passed through a bottle of turpentine,—for its carbonization as was alleged on Mr. Paine's part,—that carburetted hydrogen did come out of that bottle and burnt brilliantly,—that when the pipe entering the bottle was withdrawn, they satisfied themselves that the gas contained in that pipe was hydrogen, but that when they replaced the pipe (the question is to what extent, or whether they did so fairly and properly), they found that the hydrogen *remained* pure, or ceased to be carbonized, judging merely by the aspect of the flame produced, which, however, Mr. Paine's son or brother insisted, on the other hand, was brighter than the mere hydrogen before ignited. There the matter appears to rest, except that unworthy motives were attributed to the individual present on the part of Mr. Paine. Considering what has occurred in this country, however, when gas engineers employed by companies were called upon to give evidence as to new processes and cheap gas, such parties are at least obnoxious to the like suspicions, and are by no means the proper arbiters in a case such as this. If we have doubts on the subject, as we have all along had, they are not likely to be either confirmed or removed in this way.

HATCHMENTS ON HOUSES.

THERE are many who look on these heraldic decorations as mere general emblems of mortality, indicating nothing more than that a death has lately occurred. Yet we can, on making ourselves acquainted with the simple rules by which the arrangement of the several achievements is regulated, at once know what rank the deceased held when living. If the hatchment be that of a lady, whether she was unmarried, a wife, or widow; if that of a gentleman, whether he was a bachelor, a married man, or a widower.

To show how easily this information can be acquired, we shall briefly state the several distinctions, as set forth in the introduction to "The Heraldic Register for 1849-50," by Mr. J. Bernard Burke,* whose able and continuous labours in a similar path are well known:—

"On the morning of interment a hatchment is placed on the front of the house belonging to the deceased, and another over the vault or tomb after burial.

"The funeral escutcheon of *a bachelor* represents his paternal arms single, or quartered with those of his mother, and accompanied with the helmet, crest, and motto. The ground of the hatchment (the vacant canvas on each side of the shield) is black.

"For *a maiden*, her paternal arms are placed in a *lozenge*, single or quartered as those of a bachelor, with no other ornament than a gold cord loosely knotted at the top of the lozenge. The ground outside the shield is, like the former hatchment, black.

"When *a husband* dies, leaving his wife surviving, the ground on the dexter side of the hatchment (that is, the side of the escutcheon opposite the left hand of the person looking at it) is black; and that on the sinister side (opposite the right hand of

* Additional MSS. Nos. 10,292, 10,293, and 10,294.

† Quoted in *Promptorium*.

‡ MS. Bibl. Egerton, in Mus. Brit., No. 926, as quoted in *Archæological Journal*, *ut supra*.

* The Heraldic Register, 1849-50; with an Introductory Essay on Heraldry, and an Annotated Obituary. By Mr. J. Bernard Burke, author of "The Peerage," &c. London, Churton, 1850.

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